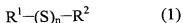


AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A flavor precursor composition comprising as an active ingredient

a flavor precursor compound which is an organic compound represented by Formula

(1):



wherein n is 2, R² is selected from the group consisting of 2-Furfuryl, 2-Methyl-3-furyl, 5-Methyl-2-furfuryl, 3-Furyl, 1-(2-Furyl)ethyl, 1-(2-Methyl-3-furylthio)ethyl, 2-Furyl, 2-Thienyl, 2-Methyl-3-thienyl, 5-Methyl-2-thenyl, 3-Thienyl, 1-(2-Thienyl)ethyl, 1-(2-Methyl-3-thienylthio)ethyl, 2-Thienyl and hydrogenated forms thereof and R¹ is a represents the residue of a sulfur-containing amino acid or peptide selected from the group consisting of cysteine, homocysteine, glutathione, γ-glutamylcysteine, and cysteinylglycine wherein the mercapto group of said sulfur-containing amino acid or peptide is present in the disulfide bond of the organic compound represented by Formula (1).

2. (Canceled)

3. (Previously Presented) A method for releasing the flavor component from the flavor precursor composition as set forth in Claim 1 wherein the disulfide bond in said flavor precursor compound is cleaved using a reducing compound.

4. (Previously Presented) A method for releasing the flavor component from the

flavor precursor composition as set forth in Claim 1 wherein the disulfide bond in said flavor precursor compound is cleaved using a compound exerting its reducing ability via a reversible reaction.

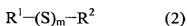
5. (Previously Presented) A method for releasing the flavor component from the flavor precursor composition as set forth in Claim 1 wherein the disulfide bond in said flavor precursor compound is cleaved using a compound having a free mercapto group.

6. (Previously Presented) A method for releasing the flavor component from the flavor precursor composition as set forth in Claim 1 wherein the disulfide bond in said flavor precursor compound is cleaved by heating.

7. (Previously Presented) A method for releasing the flavor component from the flavor precursor composition as set forth in Claim 1 wherein the disulfide bond in said flavor precursor compound is cleaved by altering the pH.

8. (Previously Presented) A method for releasing the flavor component from the flavor precursor composition as set forth in Claim 1 wherein the disulfide bond in said flavor precursor compound is cleaved by an electric reducing action.

9. (Currently Amended) A novel sulfide compound which is an organic compound represented by Formula (2):



wherein m represents an integer of 2 or 3, R^2 is selected from the group consisting of 2-Furfuryl, 2-Methyl-3-furyl, 5-Methyl-2-furfuryl, 3-Furyl, 1-(2-Furyl)ethyl, 1-(2-Methyl-3-furylthio)ethyl, 2-Furyl, 2-Thienyl, 2-Methyl-3-thienyl, 5-Methyl-2-thienyl, 3-Thienyl, 1-(2-Thienyl)ethyl, 1-(2-Methyl-3-thienylthio)ethyl, 2-Thienyl and hydrogenated forms thereof and R^1 is a represents the residue of a sulfur-containing amino acid or peptide selected from the group consisting of ~~eystine~~, cysteine, homocysteine, glutathione, γ -glutamylcysteine, and cysteinylglycine wherein the mercapto group of said sulfur-containing amino acid or peptide is present in the disulfide or trisulfide bond of the organic compound represented by Formula (2),

or

a novel compound which is an organic compound represented by Formula (3):



wherein R^2 is R^4 is selected from the group consisting of 2-Methyl-3-furyl, 5-Methyl-2-furfuryl, 3-Furyl, 1-(2-Furyl)ethyl, 1-(2-Methyl-3-furylthio)ethyl, 2-Furyl, 2-Methyl-3-thienyl, 5-Methyl-2-thienyl, 3-Thienyl, 1-(2-Thienyl)ethyl, 1-(2-Methyl-3-thienylthio)ethyl, 2-Thienyl and hydrogenated forms thereof and R^1 is an amino acid other than cysteine R^3 represents the residue of a sulfur-containing amino acid or peptide selected from the group consisting of cysteine, homocysteine, glutathione, γ -glutamylcysteine, and cysteinylglycine wherein the mercapto group of said sulfur-containing amino acid or peptide is present in the monosulfide bond of the organic compound represented by Formula (3).

10. - 15. (Canceled)

16. (Previously Presented) A food or drink comprising a flavor precursor composition of Claim 1.

17. (Previously Presented) A food or drink comprising the sulfide compound of Claim 9.

18. (Previously Presented) A flavor precursor composition comprising as an active ingredient the sulfide compound of Claim 9
and a suitable excipient.

19. (Previously Presented) A method for releasing the flavor component from the flavor precursor composition as set forth in Claim 18 wherein the sulfide bond in said flavor precursor is cleaved using a reducing compound.

20. (Previously Presented) A method for releasing the flavor component from the flavor precursor composition as set forth in Claim 18 wherein the sulfide bond in said flavor precursor is cleaved using a compound exerting its reducing ability via a reversible reaction.

21. (Previously Presented) A method for releasing the flavor component from the

flavor precursor composition as set forth in Claim 18 wherein the sulfide bond in said flavor precursor is cleaved using a compound having a free mercapto group.

22. (Previously Presented) A method for releasing the flavor component from the flavor precursor composition as set forth in Claim 18 wherein the sulfide bond in said flavor precursor is cleaved by heating.

23. (Previously Presented) A method for releasing the flavor component from the flavor precursor composition as set forth in Claim 18 wherein the sulfide bond in said flavor precursor is cleaved by altering the pH.

24. (Previously Presented) A method for releasing the flavor component from the flavor precursor composition as set forth in Claim 18 wherein the sulfide bond in said flavor precursor is cleaved by an electric reducing action.

25. (Previously Presented) A food or drink comprising a flavor precursor composition of Claim 18.

26. (Previously Presented) The flavor precursor composition of Claim 1, further comprising a suitable excipient.

SUPPORT FOR THE AMENDMENT

Claims 2 and 10-15 were previously canceled.

Claims 1 and 9 has been amended.

The amendment of Claims 1 and 9 is supported by the specification as originally filed, for example at page 3, line 3 to page 4, line 12, page 6, lines 4-27, page 8, lines 4-13, and page 11, line 11 to page 13, line 2.

No new matter has been introduced by the present amendment.